EXHIBIT 3 DATE 1-7-09

Welcome to the Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA). We represent the interests of elected school boards governing K-12 public education throughout Montana and our membership encompasses virtually every school board in the state, from east to west, large to small and between MTSBA has been a leader in public education advocacy



since its inception in 1926. We provide training, advocacy, legal and policy services to Montana's public schools in pursuit of our core purpose:

"To maximize the potential of every child through school board leadership"

MTSBA is part of a nationwide federation of state school boards associations, organized through the National School Boards Association. NSBA and its federation members collectively represent over 95,000 dedicated local school board members. MTSBA represents the interests of over 1500 elected volunteer trustees throughout Montana and promotes and provides leadership opportunities focused on the needs of trustees.

MTSBA is governed by a Board of Directors made up of trustee representatives from across the state. We have 11 Directors from geographic districts, 7 Municipal Directors, a Director of the Indian School Board Caucus, and a MHSA Representative.

Local Control Under The Montana Constitution

Unlike many states, where the state takes the lead role in education, the ultimate responsibility for quality public education in Montana rests with the local school board. The Montana Constitution is unique in placing both supervision and control of public education in the school boards' hands. Article X, Section 8 of the Montana Constitution articulates this vision eloquently and directly:

School district trustees. The *supervision and control* of schools in each school district shall be vested in a board of trustees to be elected as provided by law.

As clearly enunciated in Montana's Constitution, the role of school boards in public education is pivotal.

MTSBA's Services

Professional Services:

The Association offers the best <u>legal</u>, <u>personnel</u>, <u>policy</u>, <u>superintendent search</u>, <u>investment pools</u>, <u>insurance</u>, and <u>governmental relations</u> services available in the state, and is improving and refining those services on a continual basis to save districts money and meet districts' present and evolving needs. In the complex world of local supervision and control of public education, it pays to have immediate access to seasoned advisors, which is one of the primary benefits provided by MTSBA membership.

Money-Saving Opportunities:

Membership in MTSBA is also a gateway to participation in a number of valuable and money-saving programs including our Workers' Compensation Risk and Retention Group, Montana Unified School Trust Health Insurance Program (with rate increases substantially below industry trends), Montana Schools Unemployment Insurance Program (saving members approximately 25% compared to rates charged by the State of Montana), and the Montana Unified School Trust (MUST) health insurance program among other money-saving programs. In addition, MTSBA continually strives to help member districts identify cost-saving measures and efficiencies so that resources can be directed to teaching and learning.

Please contact us at any time with any questions or issues we can help address.

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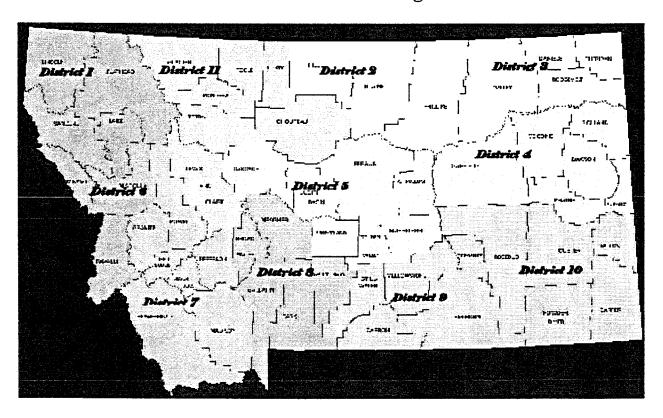
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MTSBA is a private, non-profit organization governed by a twenty member Board of Directors comprised of elected trustees from across Montana representing eleven geographical districts, seven AA Districts, a representative from MHSA and the Indian School Board Caucus.

MTSBA REPRESENTATION Director District/Regions



2008 - 2009 MTSBA Officers

Current Terms End October 2009

Association President

Barb Riley, Columbia Falls School District

President Elect

Charles Wilson, Glasgow School District

Vice-President

Mr. Jan Cahill, Great Falls School District

Past-President

Joanne Schrupp, Colstrip School District

MTSBA PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES PHILOSOPHY OF LOCAL BOARD RESPONSIBILITY

Local School Boards exemplify American principles of representative democracy. MTSBA supports the concept of strong local control of school districts as established by the Montana Constitution. Acting with primary concern for the education of the students and being accountable to the public, school boards are community decision-making agencies for the public schools. Therefore, the Montana School Boards Association supports and recommends the following principles and guidelines:

STANDARDS OF LOCAL BOARD OPERATIONS

- School Boards should function in a nonpartisan, broadly representative, teamspirited manner-and should let consideration for the entire district take precedence over every form of partisanship and special interest: political, racial, religious, geographic, economic, social, civic, or other.
- School Boards should adopt clearly defined written policies based on a thorough understanding of the educational process and, in formulating these policies, consult individuals and groups affected by the policies, and should properly delegate execution of those policies to employed professional administrators.
- School Boards should conduct school district business in open session, except as
 otherwise provided by law, and endeavor by every possible means to inform the
 public concerning the schools.
- MTSBA encourages board development, scholarly research, and experimental
 efforts, which offer promise of improving school board capabilities and
 procedures.

SCHOOL PERSONNEL

- School Boards should employ competent personnel. They should work to maintain and improve the professional status of the teaching profession, cooperating with the State Board of Public Education and Board of Regents in this endeavor.
- Local School Boards should review school district policies and practices to ensure that employment, training, retention and promotion are provided without regard to age, race, religion, sex, national origin, or handicap.
- Local School Boards should set up satisfactory procedures for communication in
 determining general policies relating to the operation of the schools, the handling
 of personnel problems, and the general welfare of all personnel. MTSBA
 encourages local school boards to establish and use open channels of
 communication with nonprofessional and professional personnel so decisions
 affecting the interest and welfare of those personnel may be made only after
 careful board consideration.
- MTSBA encourages School Boards to invite classroom teachers, administrators, and other personnel to contribute to the decision making process and to make recommendations.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

- Local School Boards should maintain management responsibilities in collective bargaining.
- Each School Board engaged in collective bargaining should retain the sole responsibility for making final decisions on behalf of the electorate district.

EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

- Local School Boards should provide full access to educational opportunities which are provided at public expense regardless of a student's race, color, sex, marital status, age, creed, religion, physical or mental handicap or national origin.
- Educating the handicapped is a local district responsibility and the legislature should appropriate all funds necessary for school districts to meet the requirements of all state and federal mandates in the area of education of the handicapped.
- It is important to develop a program of instruction to address areas of giftedness.
- Every effort is to be made to facilitate and encourage all youth to complete at least a high school or other appropriate 12-year educational program.
- Each school district should include in its curriculum recognition of the pluralistic cultures that make up our society, recognizing cultural diversity as an asset and responding to the fact that children of diverse cultural background have identifiable needs and strengths.

COMMUNITY USE AND EDUCATION

Since educational facilities represent a sizeable public investment, school
facilities should be available for public use when possible. School Boards are
encouraged to support programs that will provide for interaction between the
schools and the community, provided that these programs do not adversely affect
the school district's educational programs; and to provide facilities for teaching
adult educational programs based on community need and interest.

STUDENTS' RIGHTS/PARENTAL RIGHTS

 All School Boards, after involving students and parents, staff, and community, should establish written policies on student and parental rights and responsibilities that are in accord with federal and state laws and establish due process procedures for the administration of these policies.

CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

- Every School Board should have in place a procedure for the resolution of controversial issues, and such procedure should allow for the balanced presentation of all sides of the issue.
- Decisions reached should be based on the merits of the factual materials presented.

LOCAL CONTROL

• In order to properly discharge their responsibility, local School Boards should control the funds used to operate the schools.

All publicly funded elementary and secondary programs, including federal
assistance programs, which involve education should be established and operated
under the authority of public schools and be designed to avoid duplication of
educational agencies.

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

- The American tradition of the separation of church and state is to be safeguarded vigorously.
- Funds raised by general taxation for educational purposes should be administered by public officials and not be used to support any privately operated schools.
- MTSBA recognizes that any group or individual has the right to establish and maintain schools as long as such schools are financed by their own supporters and are subject to governmental supervision needed to assure minimum standards of instruction.
- The Association opposes any proposal by the Congress or State Legislature to subsidize elementary or secondary schools through tax credits and/or vouchers for the parents or guardians of children who are enrolled in such schools.

STATE SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS

• MTSBA urges adequate state funding of all programs necessary to provide a quality education, and full state funding of the base budgets of all budgeted funds, providing full funding of any state mandates.

STUDENTS AT RISK

• Local School Boards are encouraged to join with parent, community, state, and national organizations to address the problems of drug, alcohol, and substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, suicide, communicable diseases, and other problems which risk the health and educational potential of each student.

CONSERVATION OF ENERGY RESOURCES

• Local school districts should initiate a concerted effort to reduce energy consumption. To accomplish this goal, MTSBA urges local School Boards to make use of local, state, and national programs set up for this purpose.

HEALTH & SAFETY ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

- Local school districts should ensure that all their school buildings and transportation are fully inspected and appropriate action is to be taken to render them safe.
- School districts are encouraged to develop policies and procedures for emergency situations.

ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

• Local school districts are encouraged to give annual achievement tests based upon the district's stated curriculum or IEP objectives in order to improve the quality of student instruction.

MONTANA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

• MTSBA urges School Board members to become actively involved in MHSA by studying and voting on the annual resolutions and by encouraging board representation at the annual MHSA meeting as well as other functions during the year.

TAX POLICY

The following are indicators of a high-quality revenue system, which is necessary to preserve a stable and sufficient revenue base for school funding. A high-quality revenue system:

- Is comprised of elements that are complementary, including the finances of both state and local governments;
- Produces revenue in a reliable manner. Reliability involves stability, certainty and sufficiency;
- Relies on a balanced variety of revenue sources;
- Treats individuals equitably;
- Facilitates taxpayer compliance because it is easy to understand and minimizes compliance costs;
- Promotes fair, efficient and effective administration;
- Is responsive to interstate and international economic competition;
- Minimizes its involvement in spending decisions and makes any such involvement explicit; and
- Is accountable to taxpayers.

SCHOOL FINANCE REFORM

The following are criteria by which proposals for school finance reform should be evaluated:

- The state's funding of public education should provide for a stable, reliable and predictable commitment of revenue.
- State funding levels for public education should be a function of the actual cost of providing a quality education.
- Adequate funding should be sought through the addition of new state revenues for public education.
- Any funding formula developed by the Montana Legislature shall place high priority upon achieving the goal of equity and adequacy in providing financial resources to local school districts.
- Increased state funding for public education should not reduce the access of school districts to the local property tax base.

CULTURAL INTEGRITY

• MTSBA commits to the preservation of and education regarding the cultural integrity of American Indian Tribes and Peoples.

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